

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FUNDS  
359.30-532

For  
ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF  
TENNESSEE SUBSIDIZED GUARDIANSHIP  
WAIVER DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Issued by  
Tennessee Department of Children's Services  
436 Sixth Avenue North  
Cordell Hull Building, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Proposals must be submitted  
No later than 5:00pm C.S.T.  
March 9, 2006

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For further information regarding this AOF  
Contact Diane Craver  
Telephone: 615-741-9854  
Email: [Diane.Craver@state.tn.us](mailto:Diane.Craver@state.tn.us)

**LATE PROPOSALS WILL BE REJECTED**

## **SECTION 1.0 - GENERAL INFORMATION**

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### **1.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this Announcement of Funds is to select an Independent Evaluator who will have the task of evaluating and assessing the State of Tennessee Subsidized Guardianship Waiver Demonstration Project. This project will be implemented by the Tennessee Department of Children's Services no later than December 31, 2006. The selection of an independent evaluator, with whom the State of Tennessee Department of Children's Service will contract, will be based upon a thoughtful and critical review of proposals.

### **1.2 Program Introduction**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has granted a federal Title IV-E waiver to the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS) under Section 1130 of the Social Security Act. The approved waiver provides the DCS the flexibility to develop and implement a Subsidized Guardianship Program for children moving from foster care to a permanent home with a Permanent Guardian. The DCS is seeking a contract for professional and technical services for the design, evaluation and study of a five-year child welfare demonstration project. The purpose of the demonstration project is to evaluate the effects of Subsidized Guardianship on length of stay, re-entry into care, timeliness to permanency, placement stability and other child and family focused measures.

As required by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the DCS will develop a contractual agreement with an independent evaluator to design and report on the effects of the Subsidized Guardianship Demonstration Project. The study must be inclusive of child welfare outcomes and other program measures specified in the Announcement of Funds.

### **1.3 Project Goals**

The goal of the Subsidized Guardianship Program is to improve permanency and safety outcomes for children and families. This will be measured by providing for an experimental evaluation of the impact of subsidized guardianship on a wide range of outcomes for children and families, a cost analysis of the intervention, and a process study of the implementation of the demonstration project.

During the five year waiver period, the target population will consist of title IV-E eligible and non-IV-E eligible children ages 0-18 in the legal custody of the state; who have been in foster care for at least nine months; are placed in a licensed foster care placement with a relative or kin; who have been in continuous-out-of-

home placement with the same caregiver for at least six (6) months; and for whom reunification and adoption are not viable options.

The Subsidized Guardianship Demonstration Project will be initially implemented in 16 counties throughout the State. The selected counties include: Shelby, Davidson, Macon, Smith, Dekalb, Cannon, VanBuren, Warren, White, Cumberland, Fentress, Overton, Putnam, Jackson, Clay and Pickett counties. In addition, the DCS will make all children statewide who have a goal of Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (PPLA) and who meet all other eligibility requirements described above eligible for subsidized guardianship.

The DCS anticipates assigning approximately 560 eligible children currently in out-of-home placement in 16 selected demonstration counties to either the experimental or control group and 196 additional children per year to either the experimental or control group over the five year course of the demonstration, for a total sample of approximately 1,540 children in the 16 selected demonstration counties. In addition, the state will assign the approximately 123 children statewide with a current goal of PPLA to either the experimental or control group.

The demonstration may be expanded to other counties in Tennessee or statewide with the approval of DHHS.

#### **1.4 Project Activity Requirements**

The independent evaluator will assist the DCS in evaluating the Subsidized Guardianship Demonstration Project. Specific activities related to the evaluation process will include:

- 1) Development and submission of an evaluation plan within 60 days of receiving notification of award for evaluation contract.
- 2) Development of the final evaluation design within the basic evaluation parameters outlined below. The evaluator will develop a sampling plan; implement random assignment of subjects to experimental and control groups to evaluate the effectiveness and cost neutrality of the program; develop and execute the data collection and analysis plans; and prepare interim and final reports.
- 3) The evaluator will test the following hypothesis: The provision of Subsidized Guardianship and post-permanency services to kinship caregivers and children in their care will Increase the number of children who exit foster care and enter permanent placement arrangements with relatives and kin; Decrease the length of time that children placed with relatives and kin remain in out-of-home placement; Protect children from subsequent abuse or neglect; and

Reduce rates of re-entry into foster care among children who exit out-of-home placement into the custody of relatives and kin.

The evaluation methodology for the outcome analysis will include the use of experimental and control groups, with children being randomly assigned to experimental and control groups to evaluate the effectiveness and cost neutrality of the program.

- 4) The outcome evaluation will compare the experimental and control group for significant differences in child safety, permanency and placement stability. Specifically, the outcome evaluation will assess the experimental and control groups for statistically significant differences in the following outcome measures.
- Mean/median length of time in out-of-home placement;
  - Number and proportion of children who achieve permanency through adoption, guardianship, or reunification;
  - Number and proportion of children who enter a permanent placement arrangement with a relative;
  - Number and proportion of guardianship placements that are disrupted and the reasons for any disruptions;
  - Number and proportion of children with subsequent alleged and/or substantiated abuse/neglect report;
  - Number and proportion of children who re-enter out-of-home placement; and
  - The number and proportion of guardianships that are dissolved and the reasons for any dissolutions.
  - State will also track variables in relation to gender, age and race.

Data to address these questions will be collected from the DCS TN Kids (automated child welfare information system), child welfare case records, and additional information sources as appropriate. The DCS will work with the independent evaluator to identify other appropriate data sources to address the outcome measures described above. The evaluator will be required to develop any additional surveys and instruments to collect data related to outcomes.

All proposals should include a range of options for methods related to collecting information and developing evaluation procedures for tracking the outcomes listed above. The range of options should specify the method/tool (e.g. focus groups, interviews, etc.) and the frequency of data collection using the method.

Proposals should also include a method and plan for assisting the DCS with training of staff. Evaluators will participate in community forums to explain the justification and operations of random assignment to researchers, caseworkers, and community members. Evaluators will, also, be involved in the planning Process to ensure that the DCS training plan doesn't get implemented in a way that jeopardizes the integrity of the experimental design.

The evaluator is free to propose additional research questions and outcome measures for inclusion in the evaluation.

- 5) Should the Subsidized Guardianship Demonstration be expanded, the DCS will submit for approval by DHHS a plan for conducting the evaluation in any additional counties or statewide. Participation in the program evaluation will be a requirement for other counties to participate in the Subsidized Guardianship Demonstration. Any evaluator proposal needs to include a fiscal estimate for possible cost of expansion of the evaluation process, on a per county basis. The original contract will be for evaluation of the Demonstration in the 16 counties; Shelby, Davidson, Macon, Smith, Dekalb, Cannon, VanBuren, Warren, White, Cumberland, Fentress, Overton, Putnam, Jackson, Clay and Pickett counties. However, if the demonstration is expanded, the DCS will provide updated estimates of anticipated sample sizes for the experimental and control groups, and will renegotiate the costs for expansion.
- 6) Process Evaluation: The evaluator will produce interim and final process analyses that describes how the demonstration was implemented for the experimental cases, and identify how this differed from the services received by subjects in the control/comparison group. The analysis will include a logic model that describes the demonstration's objectives, the services or other interventions provided, and the way the intervention is linked to the measurable outcomes. In addition, the process analysis will examine, as appropriate, the following:
  - The organizational aspects of the demonstration, such as the planning process, staff structure, funding committed, administrative structures, and project implementation, including ongoing monitoring, oversight, and problem resolution at various organization levels;
  - The number and type of staff involved in implementation, including the training they received, as well as their experience, education and characteristics;

- The service delivery system, including procedures for determining eligibility, referring subjects for services, the array of services available, the number of children/families served and the type and duration of services provided;
- The role of the courts in the demonstration and the relationship between the child welfare agency and court system, including any efforts to jointly plan and implement the demonstration;
- Contextual factors, such as the social, economic and political forces that may have a bearing on replicating the intervention or influence the implementation or effectiveness of the demonstration. This discussion should note any possible confounding effects of changes in these systems or changes from any other demonstrations or reforms that were implemented during the title IV-E waiver demonstration; and
- The barriers encountered during implementation, the steps taken to address these barriers, and any lessons learned during implementation.

In addition, the following process evaluation measures will be tracked by the evaluator:

- The proportion of cases eligible for guardianship;
- The proportion of eligible caregivers offered guardianship;
- The proportion of eligible caregivers who accept or reject guardianship;
- Caregivers' reasons for accepting or declining guardianship;
- For children of caregivers who decline guardianship, the proportions that are adopted, reunified, or remain in foster care;
- Of caregivers who accept a guardianship offer, the proportion who are awarded guardianship;
- The average length of time between acceptance of an offer and establishment of guardianship; and
- Barriers to the establishment of guardianship.

For each of the factors described above, the process analysis should note any differences in implementation among participating counties and between the experimental and control/comparison groups.

- 7) The evaluator will be responsible for the cost analysis. Persons submitting proposals should describe a range of options for completing the cost analysis. The DCS staff will cooperate in making cost data available or providing summary cost information as needed to the evaluator.

The cost analysis will (1) examine the costs of key elements of the services received by subjects in the experimental group and (2) compare these costs with those of the usual services/placements received by the control group. (3) The cost analysis will also include an examination of the use of key funding sources, including all relevant Federal sources such as titles IV-A, IV-B, IV-E and XIX of the Social Security Act, as well as State and local funds. (4) The purpose of the analysis will be to compare the costs of the demonstration with those of services traditionally provided to children and their families. (5) Where feasible, a cost-effectiveness analysis will be conducted to identify the cost per successful outcome for the experimental and control groups. The analysis may be conducted using one or more of the key outcome measures on which a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups were identified.

- 8) Once awarded, the evaluator will produce semi-annual progress reports throughout the demonstration project period summarizing project and evaluation activities and accomplishments during the reporting period as well as interim findings from the evaluation, if possible.

The semi-annual monitoring reports shall indicate issues or problems and resolutions regarding the implementation of the demonstration or evaluation as approved.

- Not later than 30 days following the conclusion of the project's tenth quarter, the evaluator will submit an interim evaluation report. The report must include a process analysis of the evaluation to date and any outcome data available at that time. The report must also include a brief description of the outcome and cost components of the evaluation planned and note any issues or problems anticipated in completion of these components. If the findings are unclear or incomplete, the DCS may request revisions and resubmission of the report.
- Not later than four months after the conclusion of the project (quarter 20) the evaluator will submit a final report integrating the process, outcomes and cost components of the evaluation. If the findings are unclear or incomplete, the DCS may request revisions and resubmission of the report. DCS will approve final payments to contractor when DCS determines, in its sole discretion, that the report has satisfactorily addressed all pertinent issues.
- Not later than four months after the conclusion of the project

(quarter 20), the evaluator will produce and make available public use data tapes, including documentation necessary to permit reanalysis of the data gathered during the course of the evaluation.

## 1.5 Issuing and Contracting Agency

This Announcement of Funds is issued by the Tennessee Department of Children's Services. The person responsible for managing the AOF process is Diane Craver, Director, DCS Office of Contracts and Grants Management, (615)741-9854, [diane.craver@state.tn.us](mailto:diane.craver@state.tn.us).

The contract resulting from this AOF will be administered by the Tennessee Department of Children's Services.

## 1.6 Definitions

The following definitions are used throughout the AOF:

**Contractor** means the Proposer awarded the contract based on this AOF.

**DHHS** means the Department of Health and Human Services.

**DCS** means the Department of Children's Services (Tennessee).

**Proposal** means a response to AOF.

**State** means the State of Tennessee Department of Children's Services.

**Vendor** means a firm/organization submitting a proposal in response to this AOF.

## 1.7 Clarification and/or revisions to the specifications and requirements

Any questions concerning the AOF are requested in writing on or before February 15, 2006. Questions regarding the AOF should be directed to:

Diane Craver  
Director, Office of Contracts and Grants Management  
Tennessee Department of Children's Services  
Cordell Hull Building, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
436 Sixth Avenue North  
Nashville, TN 37243  
(615) 741-9854  
Fax: (615) 244-8969  
E-Mail: [diane.craver@state.tn.us](mailto:diane.craver@state.tn.us)

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Vendors are expected to raise any questions, exceptions, or additions they have concerning the Subsidized Guardianship Demonstration Project AOF at this point in the AOF process. The DCS will send written answers to those parties who have submitted a Letter of Intent or to any other party who submits a request.

If a vendor discovers any significant ambiguity, error, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other deficiency in this AOF, the vendor should immediately notify the above named individual of such deficiency and request modification or clarification of the AOF. In the event that it becomes necessary to provide additional clarifying data or information, or to revise any part of this AOF, revisions, amendments and supplements will be provided to all vendors who have submitted a Notice of Intent to Propose or to those vendors who request such information (See Section 3.2).

## 1.8 Calendar of Events

Listed below are specific and estimated dates and times of actions related to this Announcement of Funds (AOF).

DATE	EVENT
February 9, 2006	AOF Released
February 15, 2006	Notice of Intent to Apply Deadline and AOF Written Questions Due
February 16, 2006	Vendor Tele-conference @ 1:00 pm CST
February 22, 2006	DCS Responses to Written Questions Sent
March 9, 2006	Proposals Due from Vendors – 5:00 pm CST
March 24, 2006	Notification of Intent to Award Sent to Vendor
April 17, 2006	Contract Start Date

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## 1.9 Available Funds and Contract Term

A total of up to \$1,000,000 is available to address the needs of the Subsidized Guardianship Demonstration Project Evaluation. The evaluation contract will be for a period of five years. The funding consists of \$500,000 in State funds and \$500,000 in Federal IV-E funds. This amount includes all operational costs for performance of this contract.

### Who May Apply

Any public or private agency, consortium of private agencies, or profit or non-profit incorporated organization is eligible to apply. In the event that the proposal is submitted jointly by a consortium of organizations, one organization must be designated as the lead agency. The DCS is seeking one vendor or prime contractor to fulfill all the requirements of this AOF. Agencies can have contracts with the DCS, but must identify the services provided and address any potential

or perceived conflicts of interest. The burden will be on the entity submitting the proposal to present sufficient assurances to the State that the award of the contract will not create a conflict of interest. DCS may disqualify proposals that DCS determines are a conflict of interest.

## **SECTION 2.0 - GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

**2.1** The following items are required to assure the continuation of funds. These requirements will form part of the contract used to award these funds. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disallowances of expenditures or termination of the agreement.

1) **Acceptance of Proposal Content**

A successful Proposer who receives this award will be obligated to meet all requirements mandated within this AOF. Mandated requirements include language in this AOF narrative which reads “must,” “must ensure,” “is responsible for ensuring,” and any other statement which denotes that a specific action or responsibility is expected.

2) **Reports and Documentation**

Reports and documentation of both programmatic and fiscal activity will be required for the purpose of documenting the satisfactory meeting of contract responsibilities, in accordance with the requirements contained within this AOF and in the final contract. Failure of the successful Proposer to accept these obligations may result in cancellation of the award.

As part of its contract obligations, the successful Proposer shall, at the request of DCS, appear before DCS managers or any other persons or groups, including committees or the Legislature, to clarify findings and to answer any questions at any time during or after the contract period.

The contractor shall complete and submit all reports for state or federal reporting as required in the contract.

3) **News Releases**

News releases pertaining to this award or any part of the proposal shall not be distributed without the prior written approval of DCS. Copies of any news releases distributed regarding this program during the contract period will be submitted to and approved by the Contract Administrator prior to release.

4) **Legal Services**

Contract funds may be used by the vendor to provide legal advice to the program for purposes of carrying out its contract obligations. Funds cannot be used to support any legal actions taken against federal, state, county, or tribal governmental agencies, including lobbying or contract disputes that might arise with DCS.

5) **Sub-contracting**

If a Proposer plans to use subcontractors for any components of the required services, this should be clearly detailed in a separate budget submitted with the proposal. However the prime contractor will be solely responsible for assuring the performance of all aspects of the contract.

The use of subcontractors at any time during the contract period by the successful Proposer for any portion of the scope of work detailed in the AOF is subject to the prior written consent of DCS. The DCS may request such additional information and written assurances as deemed necessary to ensure that only qualified, competent individuals, agencies, or groups perform services under the contract, and to ensure that the required scope of work is performed in a professional manner.

6) **Audits**

The successful Proposer will submit to the DCS a certified annual audit report within 180 days after the close of the state fiscal year. The audit shall be conducted and reports submitted in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations and guidelines and professional standards.

The DCS reserves the right to conduct an independent audit of the successful Proposer if the Proposer fails to secure an audit covering all funds or a follow-up review of selected areas is determined to be necessary. In the event that the successful Proposer fails to secure an audit, the DCS costs for completing an audit will be charged back to that organization.

7) **Termination of Agreement**

DCS may terminate this agreement at its sole discretion with thirty (30) days written notice. The State reserves the right to terminate this agreement with less notice if DCS determines a breach or default has occurred or it is necessary to protect the best interests of the State. Upon termination, DCS liability will be limited to the cost of the services performed as of the date of termination plus expenses incurred with the prior written approval of DCS.

8) **Incurring Costs**

The State of Tennessee is not liable for any cost incurred by the Proposer in responding to this AOF. Costs for the contract may not be incurred prior to the effective date of the contract.

9) **Waiver of Informalities**

DCS will review all proposals submitted by interested vendors. DCS further reserves the right to waive minor informalities. The determination of whether an AOF condition is substantive or a mere informality shall reside solely with DCS.

10) **Proprietary Information**

Data contained in the proposal, all documentation provided therein, and materials and innovations developed as a result of this contract award cannot be copyrighted or patented without written authorization from DCS. All data, documentation, and innovation become the property of the State of Tennessee Department of Children's Services. The successful Proposer agrees that DCS shall have royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable rights to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use and authorize others to use any materials and innovations developed as a result of this contract award. Any copyright material authorized by DCS or distribution of materials developed through this contract award will acknowledge use of State of Tennessee Department of Children's Services funds.

11) **Availability of Records**

All case information, paper records, written information, and any electronic data shall remain confidential, as required by law and applicable policy, and shall be the sole property of the State of Tennessee.

The contractor must respond immediately to all inquiries from DCS and make all records and any written and/or electronic case information available to DCS at any time upon request. DCS, in its monitoring of the contract, reserves the right to inspect or investigate any and all contract and subcontract agency records, procedures, and operations at any time during and after the close of the contract period.

12) **State and Federal Statutes**

The contractor must ensure that all of its employees and any other agents of the contractor have a working knowledge of and comply with all applicable state and federal statutes and regulations in performance of services delivered under the AOF.

13) **Confidentiality**

The contractor must provide all of its employees with information and training on federal and state statutes, administrative codes, and applicable policies and procedures related to confidentiality of client records as defined by DCS.

The contractor and all contractor staff conducting interviews and focus groups under this contract as an agent of DCS must sign a confidential agreement to maintain the information confidentially as required by law. All information which is made available in the records used in the evaluation process must remain confidential and cannot be disclosed outside of the evaluation audit and DCS.

The contractor will indemnify and hold harmless the Tennessee Department of Children's Services from all damages, costs, liabilities, and expenses caused by or arising from the contractor's failure to protect confidential information.

14) **State Policies**

The contractor must comply with all policies, procedures and provisions as referenced or attached to this AOF or otherwise provided by DCS.

This Announcement of Funds does not act as a contract. Contract Terms and Conditions shall be developed and awarded to the selected Independent Contractor. Under the terms of the contract between the State and the Proposer selected under this AOF, the individuals that are funded under the contract cannot be used to perform any functions of the contractor other than those stipulated by the Department of Children's Services.

## **SECTION 3.0 - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND NOTICE INFORMATION**

### **3.1 Technical Assistance**

Technical assistance regarding the proposal guidelines is available on request. Vendors may submit written questions regarding the AOF requirements until February 15, 2006. The DCS will send written answers to those parties who have submitted a Letter of Intent or to any other party who submits a request. Written requests for technical assistance on the proposal guidelines should be addressed to:

Diane Craver, Director, Grants and Contracts Administration  
Tennessee Department of Children's Services  
436 Sixth Avenue North  
Cordell Hull Building, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Nashville, TN 37243

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(615) 741-9854  
Fax: (615) 244-8969  
E-Mail: [Diane.Craver@state.tn.us](mailto:Diane.Craver@state.tn.us)

A Vendor Tele-conference will be held on Thursday, February 16, 2006 at 1:00 PM CST. Interested parties who submit an intent to propose will be notified of the specific details of the phone call.

### 3.2 Notice of Intent to Apply

Vendors are requested to submit a Notice of Intent to Apply to DCS by February 15, 2006. DCS will send written clarifications and supplemental information regarding the AOF, if any, only to those parties who have submitted timely notice of intent. Notice should be submitted to:

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Diane Craver, Director, Grants and Contracts Administration  
Tennessee Department of Children's Services  
Cordell Hull Building, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
436 Sixth Avenue North  
Nashville, TN 37243

## SECTION 4.0 - SUBMITTAL OF PROPOSAL

- 4.1 All proposals must be typed in a 12-point font and doubled-spaced with no more than 5 pages per proposal component.

Vendors may submit only one (1) proposal.

Number of copies. The vendor must submit eight (8) copies of the proposal to:

Diane Craver  
Director, Grants and Contracts Administration  
Tennessee Department of Children's Services  
Cordell Hull Building, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
436 Sixth Avenue North  
Nashville, TN 37243

Closing date. The closing date for the receipt of all proposals under this solicitation is 5:00 p.m., March 9, 2006. Proposals may be mailed or hand delivered. A proposal will be accepted and considered received on time if the proposal is received by the mailroom (address shown above) or hand delivered by 5:00 p.m. on March 9, 2006.

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**NO FAXES WILL BE ACCEPTED.** To ensure confidentiality of the document, all proposals must be packaged, sealed, and show the following information on the outside of the package:

- Vendor's name and address
- Announcement of Funds Number and Title
- Proposal due date and time

Vendors are cautioned to allow sufficient time for delivery by the U.S. Post Office to DCS, because it can sometimes take several days to receive mail from outlying areas. Any proposals which are received after the closing date and time will not be reviewed and will be returned to the vendor.

**No exceptions will be allowed.**

Supplemental and clarifying information will not be accepted from a vendor after the deadline for submittal of proposals, unless requested by DCS.

## **SECTION 5.0 - AWARDING FUNDS INFORMATION**

### **5.1 Evaluation Committee**

All proposals received will be reviewed on a competitive basis by an evaluation committee and ranked accordingly. The evaluation committee will be responsible for the review and evaluation of technical merit. Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated according to the following criteria in Sections 5.2 through 5.4.

### **5.2 Preliminary Evaluation**

The proposals will be reviewed initially to determine if submission requirements are met. Failure to meet submission requirements of the AOF may result in rejection of the proposal.

### **5.3 Evaluation Criteria**

Accepted proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation committee and scored against the stated criteria. A vendor may only contact a member of the evaluation committee in response to an inquiry from the committee. The committee may review references and other industry sources and users known to the evaluation team and request interviews and use the results in scoring the proposals.

**The proposals will be scored using the following criteria:**

<b>COMPONENT</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
Organizational Experience	15
Organizational Compatibility	15
Staffing Qualifications	15

Methods / Workplan	<del>30</del>
Budget	<del>25</del>

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#### Budget Evaluation Criteria

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After the final grading of the proposal requirements, ~~budgets~~ will be ~~scored~~ with the lowest cost proposal given the highest score for this category.

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### 5.4 Oral Presentations

Top scoring vendors, based on an evaluation of the written proposals, may be required to participate in interviews or site visits to support and clarify their proposals, if requested by the State. The State will make every reasonable attempt to schedule each presentation at a time and location that is agreeable to the vendor. Failure of a vendor to interview or participate in a site visit on the date scheduled may result in rejection of the vendor's proposal.

### 5.5 Vendor Responses

DCS reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, waive minor informalities and accept only the most qualified offer in the judgment of the State. In the event a contract is awarded, the contents of this AOF (including all attachments), AOF addenda and revisions and the proposal from the successful vendor(s) will become contractual obligations. DCS may negotiate the terms of the contract, including the award amount, with the selected vendor prior to entering into a contract. If contract negotiations cannot be concluded successfully with the highest scoring vendor, the State may negotiate a contract with the next highest scoring vendor.

Justifiable modification may be made in the course of the contract only through prior consultation with and the written approval of DCS. Failure of the successful vendor to accept these obligations may result in cancellation of the contract.

### 5.6 Withdrawal of Proposals

Proposals shall be irrevocable until the contract is awarded, unless the proposal is withdrawn. Vendors may withdraw a proposal in writing at any time up to the proposal closing date and time. To accomplish this, the written request must be signed by an authorized representative of the vendor and submitted to the AOF project manager. If a previously submitted proposal is withdrawn before the proposal due date and time, the vendor may submit another proposal at any time up to the proposal closing date and time.

### 5.7 Award Procedures

The Evaluation Committee's scoring will be tabulated and vendors will be ranked according to the numerical score received. ~~The DCS reserves the right to reject~~

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any or all proposals and to negotiate the contract amount, the evaluation process, authorized budget items, and specific programmatic goals with the selected vendors prior to entering into a contract.

#### **5.8 Notice of Non-Approval and Rights of Vendor**

Each vendor whose proposal is reviewed by the Evaluation Committee shall receive written notice of the determination of approval or non-funding of the proposed project.

### **SECTION 6.0 - PROPOSAL ORGANIZATION AND FORMAT**

#### **6.1 Proposal Organization**

The evaluation and selection of a contractor and a contract will be based on the information submitted in the successful Proposer's proposal. Vendors may submit only one (1) proposal. Failure to respond to each of the requirements in the AOF may be the basis for rejecting a response. Proposals must be organized as follows:

- a. Cover Page
- b. Organizational Experience
- c. Organizational Compatibility and Programmatic Background
- d. Staffing Qualifications
- e. Methods / Workplan
- f. Budget
- g. Designation of Confidential and Proprietary Information Form,
- h. Vendor Reference Form

#### **6.2 Cover Page**

Cover page must include the vendor name and indication of proposal in response to AOF 359.30-532, Assessment and Evaluation of Tennessee Subsidized Guardianship Waiver Demonstration Project.

#### **6.3 Organizational Experience**

In this section of the proposal, the Proposer is to provide a full discussion of the organizational experience and successful outcomes of that experience that demonstrate the capacity of the Proposer to successfully conduct the evaluation of the Subsidized Guardianship Demonstration Project.

The narrative should, at a minimum, include full and in-depth presentation of information related to the following items:

- 1) Experience conducting social service research using a random assignment approach
- 2) Experience conducting evaluations of child welfare programs
- 3) Familiarity with Title IV-E waiver evaluation requirements
- 4) Experience using data from SACWIS systems that are similar in nature to the TN SACWIS system (TNKids)
- 5) Ability to work with decentralized services sites
- 6) Experience conducting focus groups and client interviews

#### **6.4 Organizational Compatibility and Programmatic Background**

Provide an introduction to your organization that includes a description of the administrative and organizational structure within which the proposed project will function. Include a description of:

- 1) The organization's mission, vision, philosophy or purpose;
- 2) An organizational chart or description of the structure of the organization;
- 3) Relationships with other community, state, regional, or national entities relevant to this project.

The Proposer must demonstrate knowledge of child welfare service delivery and outcome measures, along with related programmatic and social issues. Areas to be addressed include knowledge of:

- 1) Child welfare operational systems at the state and county levels
- 2) Case management and permanency planning processes
- 3) Child welfare outcome measurements
- 4) Current issues pertaining to the use of relatives and kin as foster care providers/resources

#### **6.5 Staffing Qualifications**

Describe the staff the vendor will assign to the Tennessee Subsidized Guardianship evaluation and their credentials. Explain what percentage of their time and their availability will be to the Tennessee project. Include relevant experience the proposed staff will have in:

- 1) Federal and State law, rules, and policies for child welfare including permanent guardianship and the use of relatives and kin for permanency.
- 2) Data collection and reporting techniques
- 3) Evaluation of human service delivery systems, including outcome measurements
- 4) Coordinating and cooperating with other governmental and private agencies

## 6.6 Method / Work plan

A work plan must detail, in logical progression, all tasks, activities, and procedures that will be used to implement the objectives and activities outlined in Section 1.4 of this AOF. The work plan should clearly describe the nature and extent of involvement of all agencies or individuals who will be active in project implementation. If multiple options are proposed, the Proposer must uniquely identify each option and its associated budget.

Describe the role of any subcontractor(s) and include information on the individual who will be responsible for supervising and monitoring the subcontractor(s).

Describe the specific activities of your project in terms of what must be done (Methods/Work plan) to implement the strategy; when (Timetable); by whom (Personnel) and estimated staff hours per person (Resource/Allocation).

Methods must be consistent with project objectives, staffing, and the proposed budget. As previously stated, DCS is interested in proposals that provide for a range of options for collecting and evaluating data. DCS prefers proposals with the flexibility to choose options that meet evaluation objectives and are cost-effective.

## 6.7 Budget

Proposers must submit a budget.

Proposers must submit a budget using the Budget Form, Attachment A. Attachment A is a summary budget. Proposers must also submit a spreadsheet that includes all of the following items:

- 1) Salaries
  - (a) *Title of Position*: List each full time and part time position by its title (professional and clerical) that will be funded under the contract.
  - (b) *Percent of Time Budgeted*
  - (c) *Hourly Rate or Monthly Salary*: List the hourly rate or monthly salary for each position listed. If salary increases are to be effected during the contract period, this amount must be budgeted at the time of the proposal.
  - (d) *Hours per Week*: In the case of employees paid on the basis of hours worked only, estimate for each of those positions the total number of hours per week to be devoted to the project.
  - (e) *Number of Months*: Indicate the total number of months of employment to be devoted to the project for each position listed.

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- (f) *Personnel Cost*: Indicate the salary to be charged to the project for each position listed.
- (g) *Salary Sub-Total*: This is the sum of the lines above that lists the agency project positions.

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- 2) **Fringe Benefits**  
List the Fringe Benefits costs for all positions that will be funded under the project. If the position is assigned a fraction of time to the project, only that same fraction should be charged to the fringe benefits column. Fringe benefits include such items as FICA, Unemployment Insurance, Retirement, Life Insurance, Worker's Compensation, and Health Insurance. Also enter the percentage used to compute fringe benefits.
- 3) **Personal Liability Insurance**  
If applicable, enter the cost for agency personal liability insurance.
- 4) **Travel for Staff**  
List travel for agency meetings.
- 5) **Equipment**  
List equipment required for evaluation activities
- 6) **Supplies and Operating Expenses**  
List supplies/services for evaluation activities.
- 7) **Contractual and Consultant Costs**  
Attach a detailed listing of any consultants or services for which you intend to contract from a source outside your agency or organization. The listing should specify the proposed areas and activities to be done by each subcontractor or consultant(s).
- 8) **Other**  
Enter the total cost and attach a list describing any other expenses of the project that do not fall into any of the previous categories. This may include other agency overhead to manage the contract.

For the range of options under Section 1.4.4 and 1.4.7, vendors may submit a separate budget for each range of options. Only the budget corresponding to the options determined to best suit the needs of DCS will be scored.

## 6.7 Proposer References

Proposers must include in their proposal a list of all organizations or individuals with whom you have done social service evaluations within the last three years.

Deleted: For the range of options under Section 1.4, Vendors may submit multiple budget sheets showing the cost difference of more intensive evaluation methods.¶

For each organization or individual, the Proposer must include the name, title, address, telephone number, and if applicable, e-mail address of a contact person along with a brief description of the project or assignment that was the basis for the business relationship. DCS will determine which, if any, references to contact to assess the quality of work performed and personnel assigned to the project. The state reserves the right to check any other reference(s) that might be indicated through the explicitly specified contacts or that result from communication with other entities involved with similar projects.

**ATTACHMENT A!**

**GRANT BUDGET**

**GRANTEE:** [NAME]

**PROGRAM AREA:** [PROGRAM NAME]

Refer to Department of Finance and Administration Policy 03, Uniform Reporting Requirements and Cost Allocation Plans for Subrecipients of Federal and State Grant Monies, Appendix A for further definition of each expense object line-item in the model budget format. Policy 03 can be found on the Internet at: <http://www.state.tn.us/finance/rds/ocr/policy03.pdf>

**THE FOLLOWING IS APPLICABLE TO EXPENSE INCURRED IN THE PERIOD: [DATE] through [DATE]**

<b><u>POLICY 03 Object Line-Item Reference</u></b>	<b><u>EXPENSE OBJECT LINE-ITEM CATEGORY (detail schedule(s) attached as applicable)</u></b>	<b><u>GRANT CONTRACT</u></b>	<b><u>GRANTEE MATCH (participation)</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL PROJECT</u></b>
<u>1</u>	<u>Salaries</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>Benefits &amp; Taxes. [(PERCENT)]</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>4, 15</u>	<u>Professional Fee/ Grant &amp; Award (detail attached)</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>5</u>	<u>Supplies</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>6</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>7</u>	<u>Postage &amp; Shipping</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>8</u>	<u>Occupancy</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>9</u>	<u>Equipment Rental &amp; Maintenance</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>10</u>	<u>Printing &amp; Publications</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>11, 12</u>	<u>Travel/ Conferences &amp; Meetings</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>13</u>	<u>Interest (detail attached)</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>14</u>	<u>Insurance</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>16</u>	<u>Specific Assistance To Individuals</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>17</u>	<u>Depreciation (detail attached)</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>18</u>	<u>Other Non-Personnel (detail attached)</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>20</u>	<u>Capital Purchase (detail attached)</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>22</u>	<u>Indirect Cost. [(PERCENT)]</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>24</u>	<u>In-Kind Expense</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>25</u>	<b><u>GRAND TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>0.00</u></b>	<b><u>0.00</u></b>	<b><u>0.00</u></b>

<b>LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: [PROFESSIONAL FEE/ GRANT &amp; AWARD]</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
[SPECIFIC, DESCRIPTIVE, DETAIL]	[AMOUNT]
[REPEAT LINE AS NECESSARY]	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>[AMOUNT]</b>

  

<b>LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: [INTEREST]</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
[SPECIFIC, DESCRIPTIVE, DETAIL]	[AMOUNT]
[REPEAT LINE AS NECESSARY]	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>[AMOUNT]</b>

  

<b>LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: [DEPRECIATION]</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
[SPECIFIC, DESCRIPTIVE, DETAIL]	[AMOUNT]
[REPEAT LINE AS NECESSARY]	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>[AMOUNT]</b>

  

<b>LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: [OTHER NON-PERSONNEL]</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
[SPECIFIC, DESCRIPTIVE, DETAIL]	[AMOUNT]
[REPEAT LINE AS NECESSARY]	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>[AMOUNT]</b>

  

<b>LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: [CAPITAL PURCHASE]</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
[SPECIFIC, DESCRIPTIVE, DETAIL]	[AMOUNT]
[REPEAT LINE AS NECESSARY]	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>[AMOUNT]</b>

  

<b>LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: [SUBJECT LINE-ITEM]</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
[SPECIFIC, DESCRIPTIVE, DETAIL]	[AMOUNT]
[REPEAT LINE AS NECESSARY]	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>[AMOUNT]</b>